

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
March 21 & 22, 2006**

The regular meeting of the Washington State Transportation Commission was called to order at 9 A.M., on March 21, 2006, in Room 1D2 of the Transportation Building in Olympia, Washington.

Commissioners present at the meeting were: Chair O'Neal, Ed Barnes, Bob Distler, Dick Ford, Elmira Forner, Carol Moser and Dale Stedman.

MINUTES APPROVAL

Chair O'Neal opened the meeting and called the motion to move approval of the meeting minutes for January 17 & 18, 2006 and February 14 & 15, 2006.

It was moved and seconded to approve the January 17 & 18, 2006 and February 14 & 15, 2006 Commission meeting minutes.

Chair O'Neal moved that an attorney general opinion memo regarding the use of funds to pay costs of operation and maintenance on the Tacoma Narrows Bridge, dated 28 February 2006, be attached to the official meeting minutes. Commissioner Distler moved that an explanatory email from the AG dated 20 March 2006 also be attached. The motion to approve the minutes as amended passed unanimously.

TOLLING STUDY PRESENTATION

Jeff Buxbaum, Project Manager, Cambridge Systematics, provided a presentation regarding the implications of toll setting Policy.

The Commission discussed what rules should govern setting tolls, the public's attitude regarding the use of tolls and in what manner toll revenues should be used.

Mr. Buxbaum expanded on the role that tolling can play in developing and managing Washington's transportation system.

It was moved by Commissioner Forner and seconded by Commissioner Moser to reschedule the June 20 & 21, 2006 Commission meeting to June 13 & 14, 2006 in order to accommodate public outreach meeting schedules. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner's Distler, Moser, O'Neal and Barnes commented on their participation in the tolling focus group meetings held in Bellevue, Yakima and Vancouver.

TACOMA NARROWS BRIDGE – TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ISSUES AND NEXT STEPS FOR TOLL SETTING

David Pope, Toll Systems Manager and Linea Laird, TNB Project Manager, WSDOT, distributed a graphical representation of proposed traffic management on SR 16/TNB.

The presentation specifically covered what happens to the commute when the bridge opens. Various options of the toll payment process were discussed by Mr. Pope and Commissioners.

SR 519 PROJECT UPDATE

David Dye, Administrator, Urban Corridors and Northwest Coordination, WSDOT, presented an overview of the SR 519 Alternative Feasibility Assessment. He shared highlights of the direction that the assessment has taken and how it fits with the Alaskan Way Viaduct project.

Terry Finn, Port of Seattle, expressed strong concerns about the delay and possible demise of Phase 2 of the SR 519 project as originally conceived (i.e. grade separation through Royal Brougham). He indicated that the Port fears that the failure to complete the project will have an adverse impact on the Port of Seattle operations in a growth market.

Bill Stauffacher, BNSF, on the same matter expressed the BNSF's particular concern about the dangerous conditions existing at the BNSF mainline grade crossing of Royal Brougham as a result of the failure to complete Phase 2 of the proposed SR 519 project.

Dan Gatchet, Washington Trucking Association, shared his concerns regarding freight movement in and out of the port safely, which is aggravated by the fact that Phase 2 of SR 519 has not been completed. He also expressed upset at the truckers not having been consulted during the current review of alternatives to the original Phase project.

I-917 PRELIMINARY ESTIMATE OF IMPACTS

Robin Rettew, Office of Financial Management, provided an overview of preliminary estimates of impacts as a result of Initiative 915: Limiting government imposed charges relating to motor vehicles. Should the Initiative become law it would reduce projected revenues from the Legislature's 2005 transportation action by several billion dollars reducing the amount of transportation preservation and improvements that could be achieved. She noted that Initiative 915 has been renumbered Initiative 917.

TRANSPORTATION INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM UPDATE AND RULE MAKING

Jeff Doyle, Director, Public-Private Partnerships, WSDOT, explained a conflict within the proposed TIPP rule was found. He suggested an approach to be taken to resolve the conflict.

2006 LEGISLATIVE OVERVIEW

Jennifer Ziegler, Director, Governmental Affairs, WSDOT, briefed the Commission regarding legislation impacting the Department.

PUBLIC AND LEGISLATOR COMMENT PERIOD

No public or legislators were present for comment.

I-90 CORRIDOR CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Don Whitehouse, Administrator, South Central Region, WSDOT, provided an update of the I-90 Snoqualmie Pass East – Cascade connection project. He explained the importance of the project along with proposed improvements and design alternatives.

2006 LEGISLATIVE GOVERNANCE DECISIONS

Senator Mary Margaret Haugen, Chair, Senate Transportation Committee, shared highlights of the season's governance legislation and discussed aspects of its contents with the Commission.

RESOLUTION HONORING SENATOR BOB OKE AND HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO TRANSPORTATION

Chair O'Neal presented Commission Resolution No. 676 to Senator Oke honoring his contributions to transportation.

Senator Oke thanked the Commission and spoke briefly regarding his passions and successes during his tenure in the senate.

It was moved by the Commission to adopt Resolution No. 676 honoring Senator Oke's contributions to transportation. The motion passed unanimously.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Secretary MacDonald emphasized the importance of the 2006 legislative session. He shared highlights of the session and noted that there were many questions regarding regional issues.

Commissioners and the Secretary discussed the outcome and impacts of specific legislation.

WASHINGTON STATE FERRIES DRAFT MODAL PLAN

Ray Deardorf, Planning Director, Finance, WSF, presented the WSF draft long-range plan to the Commission for review and comment. He discussed the context of the plan and how it fits with the Washington Transportation Plan.

Commissioners and Mr. Deardorf discussed level of service standards and potential impacts of the plan on schedules and ridership.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS / UPDATES

Commissioners discussed their participation in the WTP, Rail, tolling and TIP teams. They shared highlights of their team's progress. Commissioner Forner provided an update TPAB activity.

The Commission meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m., on March 22, 2006.

WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

DAN O'NEAL, Chair

DICK FORD, Vice-Chair

EDWARD BARNES, Member

CAROL MOSER, Member

ELMIRA FORNER, Member

ROBERT S. DISTLER, Member

DALE STEDMAN, Member

DOUGLAS MACDONALD, Ex-Officio Member
Secretary of Transportation

ATTEST:

REEMA GRIFFITH, Administrator

DATE OF APPROVAL